New South

- New Orleans and the South
- Tulanians Dissent
- The Federal Executive and Civil Rights

MARCH / 1961

New South

Published by

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL
Room 201, 5 Forsyth Street, N.W.
Atlanta 3, Georgia

March, 1961
Volume 16 **Number 3**

Contents

New Orleans Experience Is New Lesson for South 3

Tulanians Dissent 8

The Federal Executive and Civil Rights 11

. . . Unquote 15

Officers

James McBride Dabbs . . . . . President
Marion A. Wright . . . . . Vice-President
A. W. Dent . . . . . Vice-President
Miss Josephine Wilkins . . . Vice-President
Rufus E. Clement . . . . . Vice-President
Joseph Haas . . . . . Counsel
Harold C. Fleming . . . . Executive Director

Information Staff

John Constable . . . Director of Information

Subscription rate . . . . . $2.00 a year

New South is published monthly except August by Southern Regional Council, Inc., Room 201, 5 Forsyth Street, N.W., Atlanta 3, Georgia. Single copies may be purchased at twenty cents each; quantity rates on request.

Contributions to the Southern Regional Council are tax-exempt

New South

Notes

New Orleans continues to be the crisis center in the desegregation controversy in the South. The lead article in this month's NEW SOUTH presents an analysis of the situation in New Orleans including the effect the controversy had on Mardi Gras and is having on business in general.

Since the article was written, the United States Justice Department has filed a civil contempt action designed to compel the State of Louisiana to release federal school funds withheld from the Orleans Parish School Board. The action was directed against Shelby M. Jackson, the State Superintendent of Public Education.

Shortly following the filing of the suit, Governor Jimmie Davis' administration transferred $2 million in homestead exemption revenue to New Orleans. The action reportedly was a "compromise" arrangement with the federal government to remove contempt action against Lt. Gov. C. C. Aycock and House Speaker J. Thomas Jewell. The money is to be used to pay teachers and employees of New Orleans schools including the two desegregated ones.

NEW SOUTH also prints a statement by 95 students from Tulane University in which they give their dissent to actions taken in the State.

NEW SOUTH also presents a summary of "The Federal Executive and Civil Rights," in which the Southern Regional Council outlines 18 proposals through which it believes President Kennedy can speed the civil rights program.

New Orleans Experience Is New Lesson for South

An Analysis of New Orleans Crisis

February was Mardi Gras time in New Orleans. Local businessmen made a particular effort to attract tourists and to achieve an atmosphere of gaiety and fun. There was a tinge of desperation to their efforts.

On the surface things seemed much as before. The mystic societies paraded and danced the nights away. The vieux carré was gay and boisterous. On Mardi Gras day crowds surged through the downtown streets wearing masks and colorful costumes.

For six long months New Orleans has been caught up in its school crisis. In February, for a few days, the city tried to live up to its slogan, "The City that Care Forgot."

This year a third of the city's population, the Negro community, boycotted the celebrations. The parades and dances of the Negro Krewes have always been a highlight of the Mardi Gras season. This year only one Negro society participated. Negro leaders called for a boycott of Mardi Gras. Negroes were urged to devote their time and resources to the struggle for equal rights.

Mardi Gras is an annual tourist bonanza to local business, important to the economy of the city. This year many tourists who traditionally flock to the event stayed home. For the first time since World War II there were hotel rooms available for the asking during the Mardi Gras season.

Throughout the celebrations classes continued at the city's two "desegregated" schools. One Negro and ten white students provided the entire student body at William Franz School. Three Negroes attended McDonough #19 School. Two white children attended this school briefly in late January but were driven out of the city with their parents in the face of threats and hostility. All schools were out for Mardi Gras day itself.

New Orleans, the Crescent City, has long held a special place in American life. With its colorful history, its quaint, old quarter, and its capacity for fun New Orleans has been one of the most unique and distinctive cities in the nation.

These things have been overshadowed by the developments of the last six months. For a generation to come New Orleans will be known primarily as a symbol of defiance, of disruption, of futility. The name of New Orleans is now known 'round the world beyond the

New Orleans

(Continued)

greatest hopes of its Chamber of Commerce.

New Orleans has paid a high price for the tensions of these six months. Business has fallen off, particularly the tourist business. Leading stores reported business off 10 to 50% of normal during the Christmas season. The public peace has been disturbed. Screaming mobs have tried to prevent children from attending public school. There has been harassment, intimidation and violence. At least two families have been driven from their homes and from the city. Several hundred children are apparently receiving no education at all. Such events leave permanent scars.

Futility

The greatest tragedy of the New Orleans crisis is its complete and utter futility. Three-quarters of a million dollars has been spent to keep the legislature in session virtually continuously, for five extraordinary sessions to date. The Governor and the legislative majority posture and scream defiance. Literally dozens of obviously useless "laws" have been passed and as quickly nullified by the federal judiciary.

All of this expense and effort has accomplished nothing. The situation in New Orleans is almost exactly as it was a few days after the schools were opened to a handful of Negro students. The schools remain open. The boycott by white extremists continues. The courageous majority of the local school board remains in firm control of the schools of the city. All of the expense, all of the ranting, all of the "lawmaking" has changed nothing. Its only effect has been to expose a great city to the ridicule and the sympathy of the nation and the world.

The present situation is not of the city's making. New Orleans has been the victim of a power struggle between the federal law and the state government. Under federal court order to desegregate, the city school board is applying the state pupil placement law and following the grade-a-year plan beginning with the first grade this year. The school board exhausted every legal effort to avoid any desegregation. Faced with a final court order the board has complied to the minimum degree acceptable to the courts. As a result of board policies the schools of New Orleans remain open and four Negro children are attending formerly white schools.

For its efforts to reconcile federal law with local custom the school board majority has been reviled, excoriated, and denounced as radical and integrationist by the legislative majority supporting Governor Jimmie (You Are My Sunshine) Davis. Four times the Louisiana legislature has tried to remove the New Orleans school board from office. The legislature has attempted to run the city schools through a legislative committee, then as a committee of the whole. The lawmakers then appointed a new school board. The city now has two "school boards," one recognized by the legislature, the other, elected board, recognized by the federal courts and the city government. All of these moves in violation of the local home rule principle were taken in support of the theory of "states rights" against federal "domination."

Louisiana today is a never-never land. There is an air of fantasy and unreality

about the maneuverings of the Governor and his followers. The legislature has passed resolutions urging teachers to leave the schools and asking for an investigation of those white parents who send their children to public schools operated in compliance with national law. Even former President Eisenhower was denounced by one lawmaker as being under Communist influence because he did not take a public stand against the federal courts.

At its fifth special session last month the legislature passed a new series of laws relating to the school issue. Among these were a local option bill which permits communities to close their schools by referendum but provides no alternative, and a law making it a crime to "directly or indirectly" encourage, influence, prompt, reward or compensate persons to send their children to desegregated schools. The fines imposed for violation of this act would be used to pay informers who give information resulting in conviction.

No Program

The actions of the political leadership of Louisiana have been taken in complete disregard of reality. The authority of the federal government is not recognized, nor is it effectively defied. The Governor and the extreme segregationists seem to have no program, no long range plans for resolving the present impasse. They simply oppose, denounce and pretend.

If the City of New Orleans is primarily a pawn in a power struggle, it must also be noted that the leadership of the city made little effort to prepare for the crisis or to forestall it. The public and civic leadership of New Orleans has been indecisive, quiescent and unwilling to buck the extremist forces head on. This is becoming less true daily in this, the seventh month of crisis.

Downtown Riot

For several days following the implementation of desegregation at the two schools, crowds were permitted to gather and to demonstrate. Mayor "Shep" Morrison commented that demonstrations were an American tradition. On the third day the demonstrations turned into a downtown riot and exploded into spasmodic incidents of personal violence throughout the night. This time the police acted with firmness. Since then, crowds have not been permitted to gather within two blocks of the schools and overt demonstrations have faded away. The police have made every effort to protect life and property, but there has only been one arrest in the area of the schools. Persons jeering or shouting obscenities are restrained or reprimanded, never arrested. Mayor Morrison points out that he is maintaining order, not enforcing integration.

Prior to desegregation, television station WDSU presented a weekly series on the school crisis. Programs featured a review of events in Little Rock, Norfolk, and Prince Edward County, Virginia. The newspapers, however, gave little editorial attention to the situation. They finally did speak out, against violence and in favor of open schools, too little and too late to be of much effect.

Two white groups did organize, in advance of the crisis, in the hope of preventing disturbances and saving the public school system. These were the Save Our Schools group and the Committee for Public Education. Modeled

New Orleans

(Continued)

somewhat after the pro-public schools groups that were active in Little Rock and in Virginia these groups worked intensively to awaken the city and to encourage planning and preparation. These groups were small and included little representation from the top leadership strata. They did, however, have access to leadership.

These groups worked to encourage statements from the mayor, from business leaders, from civic and religious groups. Few such statements were forthcoming until the city was already torn by tension. A ministers group issued an early statement in support of the schools. The Central Trades Council of the AFL-CIO went on record, as did the Independent Women's Organization, a potent, non-partisan group. A number of P.T.A. units spoke out in support of the school board, not including those at Franz or McDonough #19 Schools. Several religious denominational groups added their voices.

Business Leadership

Following the usual pattern, the group of greatest potential influence, business leadership, was slow to move. The Junior Chamber of Commerce spoke for public education. The board of directors of the Young Men's Business Club proposed a statement, but this position was repudiated by the membership. Somewhat later the club did take an open schools position. It is probable that several of the city's leading business figures counseled privately with the Governor. He had received significant business support within the city during the election campaign. But efforts to enlist the support of leading businessmen for a public appeal were unavailing.

Leadership Mobilized

The day after general rioting a number of business and civic leaders met with the mayor and a mild statement was issued deploring the disturbances. Finally, in January, over a hundred businessmen did speak out, clearly and firmly, in a full page ad in the city's two newspapers. This was four months into the school crisis.

At the present time the political, business, civic, and religious leadership of New Orleans seems to be finally mobilized in support of the school board and in opposition to the disruptive policies of the legislature. The city council expressed its opposition to some legislative actions. Mayor Morrison appeared at one of the legislative sessions to plead for a greater degree of local option for the city and was booed on the floor.

On January 31, 1961, some 1,500 citizens of New Orleans gathered at the Roosevelt Hotel to honor and support the four majority members of the New Orleans parish school board and School Superintendent Dr. James F. Redmond. An overflow audience necessitated the use of closed circuit television and two dining areas. Some 1,650 tickets were sold for the event at $5 a plate. Responding to the tribute, Louis G. Riecke, new chairman of the board, stated that the members of the board were elected to improve and perpetuate public education in New Orleans, adding, "And so help me, as long as a breath of air or a drop of blood is in us, we are going to do exactly that, come hell or high water."

No early solution to the New Orleans

school deadlock is in sight. Order has been reestablished and federal court rulings have been obeyed by local officials. The city has so far been spared the upheaval of school closures. Most of the bitterness and pressure has been directed, not at the Negro students, but at the handful of white children who courageously assert their right to attend their neighborhood public school, the William Franz School. At least several dozen parents in the community would like to send their children back to the two schools affected, but they hesitate. Several of the parents of white children now in school have lost their jobs, and it is hard for law enforcement officials to stop telephone threats directed at small children and at the mothers of these children.

Presidential Support

Moderate elements in the city were heartened by President Kennedy's recent expressions of concern, particularly his telegram to the third annual conference of the Civil Right Commission meeting in Williamsburg, Va., February 25, in which he praised the "quiet intelligence and true courage" of teachers and school officials trying to carry out desegregation in New Orleans. Several groups had previously petitioned former President Eisenhower for support and aid. His only public action was to write a letter to the *Gabrielle* family *after* the family had moved to New Jersey. Dispairing of solving the impasse locally many civic leaders now look to Washington for the support and action that the new President suggested would be forthcoming.

The South is learning by experience. Little Rock, Clinton, Nashville, the events in Virginia and North Carolina, and now New Orleans are part of this learning experience. It is possible that the agony of New Orleans will help to save other communities from similar experiences. If so it will not have been in vain. The clear lesson of New Orleans is the futility of complete resistance. To defy the authority of the federal courts is to invite chaos and to encourage direct federal intervention.

Lesson Noted

There are indications that the lesson is already being noted throughout the region. The spectre of New Orleans was frequently raised during the recent Georgia legislative session. In all probability the General Assembly of Georgia would not have been willing to repeal Georgia's massive resistance laws but for the negative example of New Orleans.

Precedents have been set in New Orleans that will strongly affect future situations. In Norfolk, Virginia, when the public schools were closed, a group of white parents successfully brought action in federal courts for the reopening of the schools on the basis of the 14th amendment. In New Orleans, for the first time, a group of white parents were successful in securing injunctions against the Governor and other state officials restraining them from applying school closing laws before the fact. This precedent may protect other Southern communities from the hardships of closed schools. The use of an interposition statute by the Louisiana legislature resulted in an unanimous U. S. Supreme Court ruling finally eliminating this outmoded doctrine as a factor in future desegregation litigation.

New Orleans also saw an expanded

New Orleans

(Continued)

use of federal legal powers that may point a direction for the future. Federal District Judge Skelly Wright requested the United States Attorney to act as a friend of the court and to initiate any action that might serve to achieve the purposes of the original desegregation ruling. For the first time, acting under this request, a U.S. attorney has brought actions in federal court dealing with such matters as the enjoinment of officials from enforcing state laws on the grounds of unconstitutionality. Also, for the first time, federal marshals have escorted white as well as Negro students to and from the schools.

There are more specific lessons for the consideration of Atlanta, Dallas and other communities facing similar court rulings next fall. If state officials had kept out of the New Orleans situation much of the recent turmoil might have been avoided. If the mayor, the media, civic and business leadership had given early and firm community leadership there might have been less disruption of law and order. If the first desegregation had occurred in middle or upper economic level neighborhoods there might have been more cooperation. The two schools to which these four Negro children were assigned are placed in somewhat economically depressed areas, neighborhoods in transition.

On the other hand where would New Orleans be today without the firm and decisive rulings of Judge Skelly Wright, the courage and leadership of the four majority members of the parish school board, the personal courage and integrity of a local minister and a meter reader, and those who joined them?

Because of the experience of New Orleans the area of maneuver for those hoping to evade the force of constitutional law has been permanently narrowed. It may well be that progress will move ahead more rapidly in the South because of this time of troubles in the Crescent City.

Tulanians Dissent

Signed by 95 Tulane Students

One sets out with some misgivings to write about current political conditions in Louisiana. The public affairs of the state have taken on, in the past two months, an aura of unreality which, by comparison, makes Alice in Wonderland appear stark realism. The governor and the legislature reveal themselves masters of Orwellian doublespeak—to hate the Negro is to love him; to discriminate against the Negro is to accord him equality; peaceful protest includes

the hurling of rocks and eggs, telephone harassment, rioting in the streets and constant threats of violence; both major political parties, both presidential candidates and the federal judiciary are communist-inspired and the national capitol is seething with subversion; teachers who obey federal court orders are to be investigated for subversion and disloyalty; the people of Louisiana who elected Kennedy electors did not really do so and the vote of the electors should be changed; the press call peaceful protest criminal mischief and rampant vandalism peaceful protest. In such an atmosphere one feels impelled to succumb to the general irrationalism and lash out with the same intemperate, unconsidered, epithet-hurling one sees and hears on every side. Yet, what does this accomplish?

Does it help to assert that the legislators are ignorant bigots with one eye to quieting their own inadequacies by persecuting the Negro and the other to any modicum of political or economic advantage which the melee may bring within reach? Does it help to notice that the state judiciary abandons all semblance of judicial decorum and lends itself to the patently farcical segregation struggle? Is it of any use to recount the idiocies of the chief executive who engages in debate with a newsman, asking him if he would want his four-year-old daughter to marry a Negro? Can it be believed that the mayor of a city of 600,000-odd souls asserts in a news conference that telephone campaigns of organized vilification and intimidation are within the rights of "peaceful dissent?" Is it credible that packs of marauding jackals destroy property and inflict bodily injury with impunity, while college students are arrested for distributing protesting but non-inflammatory literature opposing segregation? Assuredly, to state these things is to labor the obvious; yet perhaps the mere putting them on paper relieves the inner tension and makes possible a sober analysis of the situation.

What, in substance, has led Louisiana to this pass? In 1954 the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that the ancient "separate and equal" doctrine of racial segregation in public education, derived from but not explicitly stated in, the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision of 1896, was not any longer acceptable as the basis for constitutional state legislation relative to public education. The 1954 decision took judicial cognizance of the findings of psychology, i.e., that separate schools for Negroes, regardless of equality of facilities, induced in the Negro children attitudes of inferiority in violation of their constitutional rights. The court did not consider, explicitly, whether there was any basis for the obvious implication of Negro inferiority in such segregation legislation. Presumably the justices were aware that theories of racial inferiority had long since lost the last vestige of scientific and intellectual respectability. However they reckoned without, or, perhaps in spite of, the persistence of racial prejudice in the South.

It is, possibly, difficult for one who has not lived in the South to appreciate the facility with which the southerner can toss aside the accumulated findings of fifty years of social science and assert, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that the Negro is "obviously" inferior, but, withal, a happy creature—"see how they sing and dance!" It is quite common to hear

Tulanians

(Continued)

white men and women state that they would prefer their children dead to seeing them going to integrated schools. And the tragic fact is that these attitudes are most prevalent in the very areas where education has made the slightest inroads; those with the fewest educational advantages are the most insistent that closed schools are preferable to integrated schools. Of course, in the city of New Orleans a considerable body of moderate opinion persists; opposition to school closure and willingness to accept "token" integration. But these moderate groups are, like their counterparts the world over, the most insistent upon the forms of "democracy" and the processes of law; they lack the organization and numbers of the frenzied segregationists (though one group of white mothers voluntarily transports eight white children to the integrated school and receives, for its trouble, constant telephone harassment). Where one such group contributes to pay the salaries of the teachers in the integrated schools, its segregationist counterparts contribute to the cost of mass rallies, hate literature and all the accoutrement of rabid violence. And at the center of the discord are the politicos, at once the instigators and the beneficiaries of the public convulsions.

The legislature sits in continuous special session at an estimated cost of $14,000 per day. The sessions are almost wholly occupied by a parade of politicians before the microphones, denouncing all moderation as subversion, castigating reason as communism, and vowing undying devotion to our "southern way of life"—including open and mandatory racial discrimination and the accompanying exploitation of poor-white and Negro alike. And most ironical of all, it is now proposed that the state sales tax be increased by one percent to finance the continued opposition to the inevitable. The people of the state are asked to subject themselves to a painfully regressive tax measure in order to enable the politicians to completely destroy the education system which holds the only hope of enlightenment for the great mass of those people.

Does history record a more bitter satire?

This is the dilemma which Louisiana faces—the impossible conflict of reason and unreason. The U. S. Supreme Court has, in effect, declared that ignorance, prejudice, bigotry and venality will no longer be acceptable as the basis of state legislation relative to public education. Yet these four horsemen of the modern racist apocalypse presently hold sway in Louisiana. The issue, at this writing, remains in doubt, but the gloom is virtually unrelieved.

"The Independent Women's Organization warns the New Orleans public that there is danger ahead. Despite the action taken by the Louisiana School Board Association, in its ouster of four members of our school board, we repeat that no governmental agency ordered to desegregate can operate segregated schools. This is something which the Louisiana School Board Association, the governor and the Legislature will have to learn before many days have passed."

Independent Women's Organization of New Orleans.
Quoted in *Times-Picayune*, January 4, 1961

The Federal Executive and Civil Rights

The Southern Regional Council has submitted to President Kennedy and his administration a 48-page report proposing actions by the executive department to strengthen civil rights and improve race relations.

The report, entitled "The Federal Executive and Civil Rights," states that the President holds power under the Constitution and existing statutes which, if used, "could carry the country far toward good race relations."

It further declares: "Presidential action should not be so emphasized as to blunt the drive for remedial legislation. But the existing powers of the office should be used, and every governmental program administered in such ways as to move expeditiously to end discrimination and to open all careers to talent.

"The federal government's own operations need to be a model of just race relations, or else the credentials of the government to lead others are weak."

The 18 proposals made by the Council are summarized as follows:

1. That the President appoint a staff adviser on race relations and that he also create a single office to replace the present Committee on Government Employment and Government Contract Committee. The function of this office would be to review all federal programs to insure nondiscrimination in the government's own operations.
2. That the President use the influence of his office to broaden Southern support for civil rights.

"The South should be informed where the President stands . . . ," the Council said, and ". . . an earnest, informed, and tactful effort should be made to reduce antagonisms and enlist a maximum of Southern good will and cooperation."

"Controversy and conflict are only worsened," the Council noted, "when there is any arguable doubt of the beliefs and intentions of the Chief Executive, when heated strife is followed by only slight and ambiguous victories for civil rights, or when the federal government and its agencies proclaim policies which are not enforced."

3. That the President announce as a national goal the full and free development of all our human resources.

"The President speaks the moral tone of America," the Council said. "He has an incomparable position from which to define the problems of our polity and to indicate by word and example what needs to be done."

4. That our overseas information programs interpret our racial strife and change truthfully and candidly.

"The U. S. Information Agency should, of course, tell the story of Negro Americans' progress," the Council said. "But it and other officials who depict abroad American racial problems should do so with honesty, realism, and an explicit awareness of American involvement in a world-wide revolutionary movement. The peoples of Africa

Executives

(Continued)

and Asia can understand our problems, which are very close to their own experience."

5. That there be continual review of federal employment to insure nondiscrimination, rather than reliance as at present on the processing of complaints.

"While channels for receiving and investigating complaints are needful," the Council said, "the main enforcement effort ought to be shifted from the processing of complaints and focused on a continuing review of agency practices."

"Another concern . . . would be the prompt suppression of segregation wherever it may be practiced in federal offices. Local custom cannot regulate federal conduct."

6. That there be frequent appointment of qualified Negroes to high level administrative posts in government service here and abroad.

"To project Negroes into public office will be good for the race, because it will strengthen morale and sense of identification with America and will sharpen Negro incentive. It will be good for the South, which needs to get used to the idea of Negro competence and recognition. It will be good for the nation's world reputation," the Council said.

7. That the President affirm his support of the Supreme Court's 1954 decision and his opposition to segregated schools; and that the Department of Justice test in court its existing authority to intervene in or initiate school desegregation suits.

The Council noted, that, in education, "the most compelling unfinished business is school integration."

"The basic problem," it added, "is two-fold: to reestablish a climate of respect for law; and to move quickly beyond the pitiful beginnings and steadily toward an end to segregated public education."

8. That special attention to racial equality be given in federal aid for vocational training and the schooling of children of military personnel.
9. That no federal research funds be granted to colleges and universities that restrict admission because of race, creed, color, or national origin.

" . . . with the huge sums distributed for research, the government has all discretion, and grants the money only to schools which it prefers. We think there can be no argument but that it is incongruous to favor any institution which denies admission to Negro students," the Council said.

10. That the Department of Justice be vigilant in the prevention or control of violence and intimidation connected with school desegregation or sit-ins.

On this point, the Council noted:

" . . . The signs of the times are not so difficult to read that an alert government could not anticipate the likelihood of disorder in a school desegregation controversy and be armed in advance to forestall it.

"Similarly, the reaction to sit-ins has led to serious breakdowns in the public peace. The Department of Justice should

observe local situations with the utmost vigilance for evidence of unlawful arrest," and acts of violence over which the federal government has jurisdiction.

11. That the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice be adequately staffed.

The Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960 "can be enforced no more vigorously than the staffing of the Department's Civil Rights Division permits," the Council observed.

"In addition to giving immediate attention to the strengthening of this Division, the Attorney-General should look closely into the working relations between it and the U. S. District Attorneys, to the end that there be the fullest cooperation between them and the Division."

12. That the President sponsor a national voter registration drive, supported by wide distribution of information on voter qualifications and procedures in every state.

"The government might well undertake a national campaign to educate people in their voting rights and to encourage them to vote," the report noted. "If this were done with vigor and sustained attention," a side result would almost certainly be an upsurge in Negro registration in the South, as well as a clear revelation of those areas where the cause of non-voting by Negroes is intimidation, either private or official.

13. That the President require all National Guard units to drop racial bars.

Segregation in the armed services has been virtually eliminated since the 1948 Executive Order 8891. The Report noted: "The President can in the same way end discrimination in the National Guard, and the logic for doing so is compelling. The Guard is a part of the United States Army, and composition and organization of its units are required to be 'the same as those prescribed for the Army.' "

And, the Council added, "the President is directed by law to establish and maintain ROTC units, and may likewise terminate them. There would seem to be no legitimate grounds for operating an ROTC at universities, public or private, which refuse admission on racial grounds."

14. That the "separate, but equal" clause in the Hill-Burton hospital construction law be examined for unconstitutionality.

The report noted that "most of the health and recreational activities are covered by seemingly adequate regulations against racial discrimination, although there have been instances of lack of enforcement. This is not true of the grant-in-aid programs, and especially not of the huge Hill-Burton construction program . . . "

15 That a final, decisive effort be made to end segregation on common carriers in interstate or intrastate traffic.

16. That large contractors of the government be required to recruit Negro employees as a condition for contract award.

"In the absence of a fair employment act," the Council said, "the executive department might well give serious exploration to other means as well as punitive sanctions for preventing discrimination."

The Council recommended that the executive department make a firm dec-

Executives

(Continued)

laration of policy and give special attention to the employment practices of the large contractors. It suggested that "the method of attaining this goal could be certification . . . that the bidder or proposed contractor is presently operating, in all its plants and offices, without discrimination."

The Council pointed out that the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Employment security maintain copious data on the nation's work force, and "can with minimum difficulty prepare and publish current information on the number of Negroes in various categories of the working force."

These statistics, it said, should be taken into account in certifying contractors.

17. That federal cooperation with discrimination be ended at once in the apprenticeship and employment services.
18. That federal housing programs be guided by a policy of encouraging integration.

"Present housing trends," the report noted, "are injurious not only to the dwellers in the vast city areas which it becomes increasingly accurate to call ghettoes," but too many middle class white families "are separated from normal contacts with persons of other races and economic station," and municipal government and the cultural life of the cities "are being weakened by shrinkage of revenue base and population imbalance."

"The question for the federal government to face," the Council said, "is that of how it will direct the tremendous influence it has through its huge involvement in the housing market. Will it use this influence, as it has in the past and as it still largely does, to strengthen and spread housing segregation?"

The Council stated its belief that the President should take note of the sociological and psychological handicaps of housing segregation and issue an Executive Order which stated that the national housing policy is to encourage integration.

"This," the Council said, "would be the strongest possible directive to the several housing agencies to examine meticulously the laws which they administer for opportunities to reverse present trends."

In conclusion, the Council noted that "civil rights and liberties are the dignities of free men and the essential condition of a free country."

"In working for their enlargement," the Council said, "the government and we as a people do that which is closest to the core of our national purpose . . .

"The Presidency is the center of American energy. What the President says and does will mark the direction and the speed with which the country moves to perfect its racial relations."

The report was prepared by the staff and reviewed by the officers of the Southern Regional Council.

Single copies of the full report, "The Federal Executive and Civil Rights," may be obtained from the Southern Regional Council for 50¢, quantity rate 35¢ each for 50 or more.

Noteworthy quotes from the press and periodicals

. . . Unquote

"I hope that all of the people of New Orleans realize that the state administration is slowly but surely doing everything it can to hamper and harm our school system. There are even some who say that their real purpose is to close our schools. We hope not."

Mayor deLesseps S. Morrison
of New Orleans.
Quoted in *Times-Picayune*,
January 23, 1961

• • •

"My little boy is unhappy and wants to go back to McDonough. And I'd almost put him back if I wasn't scared of some of these women."

New Orleans woman in group trying to enforce complete boycott of New Orleans school which has one Negro student. Quoted by Associated Press, January 28, 1961

• • •

"There is a distinct possibility that state officials inciting private persons to defy constitutional authority, to harass and intimidate private individuals, and thereby to deprive them of legal rights, is directly violative of the equal protections clause of the [federal] Constitution."

Louisiana Advisory Committee,
U. S. Civil Rights Commission.
Quoted in *Times-Picayune*
January 4, 1961

"Because four brave little Negro girls have entered two schools in New Orleans, the educational processes of a major city have been stalled and the school board has been harassed, plagued, and intimidated by a ranting Legislature. What a tragic distortion of values!"

Msgr. L. T. Mattiesen,
Editor, *West Texas Register.*
Quoted in *Work*,
January, 1961

• • •

"Your public schools are open. The new semester of the school year is just beginning. All public schools in the parish of Orleans are open and staffed with competent teachers and administrators. The teachers are sure to welcome back any students who may have missed some time. These are your schools, paid for with your tax money to educate your children in their own neighborhood. We are faced with many new emergencies. We must train scientists, diplomats and businessmen to meet the pressing needs of the future. There is no more democratic training institution than the public school system of our country."

Mrs. N. H. Sand,
President, Save Our Schools,
of New Orleans.
Quoted in *Times-Picayune*,
January 27, 1961

The Changing South in Print!

Executive initiative and leadership can do much to promote sane and healthy racial relations in the United States. This appears to be the principal thesis of a study prepared for submission to the new President by the Southern Regional Council, an organization singularly qualified to proffer advice in this field. The study calls for a vigorous assault against the evils of segregation and racial discrimination on a variety of fronts and by diverse techniques. —*The Washington Post and Times Herald,* February 2, 1961.